WEEKLY NEWS LETTER

THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL OF THE A. F. OF L., BY INSTRUCTION OF ST. LOUIS CONVENTION, DIRECTED THE OFFICERS AT HEADQUARTERS TO FURNISH A WEEKLY NEWS LETTER, FREE OF COST, TO ALL OFFICIAL LABOR PUBLICATIONS.

Containing a brief summary of important matters, affecting labor, occurring in the industrial, legislative and judicial fields, and such other information that will further the development and progress of the trade union movement.

No. 17.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR
HEADQUARTERS
801-809 G ST. N. W., WASHINGTON, D. C.
FRANK MORRISON, SECRETARY SAMUEL GOMPERS, PRESIDENT

JAIL SENTENCES EXPECTED

Justice Wright Apparently Bent on Administering Summary Punishment to Labor Officials.

CONTEMPT CASE NEAR CLOSE

"Let Them Go As Far As They Like" Expression Has Not Been Qualified Since Made.

Washington, July 29.--A rumor which apparently will not down is to the effect that President Gompers, Secretary Morrison and Vice President John Mitchell will be haled into court shortly by Justice Wright, of the Supreme Court of the District of Columbia, in response to a demand made by the investigating committee to the court. It will be remembered that the defendants were cited to appear in court and show cause why they should not be held in contempt. Numerous motions were filed by attorneys for the defendants, all of which were overruled, and, as a last move in the case, a plea of "not guilty" was offered. The plea was taken under advisement by the court and an adjournment had, ostensibly for the purpose of the prosecution filing an answer to the plea. One of the motions made by the defendants was that the prosecuting committee be discharged on account of bias and District Attorney Wilson substituted therefor. Justice Wright disposed of this motion by the addition of the District Attorney to the committee, and he has accepted the commission as an individual. It has been stated in the public press that the defendants are to be brought into court Monday, July 31, and that the committee in charge of the prosecution will ask summary judgment, or that a motion will be made to strike out the plea of "not guilty" and require an answer under oath. There is no disguising the fact that Justice Wright seems particularly bent on punishing these men by imprisonment or heavy penalty. Every movement made on the bench, the disposition of every motion and the court's general attitude speaks plainly of his apparent intent. President Gompers stated at the time that the committee was appointed, in answer to a question: "Let them go as far as they like". It appears at this time that the court is likely to go all the way.

Carpenters at Sharon, Mass., secured advance to 54¢ per day.

A TRIP TO THE COAST

President Gompers has Completed Itinerary to Cover a Large Portion of the Northwest and California.

Washington, July 29.--In response to an urgent request, President Gompers is to make a trip to the Northwest and the State of California. Leaving Washington on Thursday, Aug. 17, his first stop will be at Denver Saturday, Aug. 19, arriving there at 1 p. m. and leaving for Salt Lake City on Monday morning, Aug. 21, at 8 a. m., arriving in Salt Lake City on Tuesday, Aug. 22 at 12:30 p. m., where he will remain until Wednesday Aug. 23, at 2:50 p. m., when he will leave for Butte, Mont., arriving there Thursday, Aug. 24 at 7 a. m. and leaving on Friday, Aug. 25, at 7:10 p. m. for Spokane; arrive at Spokane, Saturday, Aug. 26 at 6:20 a. m. He will leave Spokane Sunday, Aug. 27 at 6:20 a. m. and arrive in Seattle at 8:15 p. m.; leaving Seattle Monday, Aug. 28, 11:30 p. m., arriving at Vancouver Tuesday, Aug. 29 at 8:30 a. m. and leave Vancouver same day at 11 p. m.; arrive Seattle Wednesday morning, Aug. 30 at 8 a. m., and proceed immediately to Tacoma; leaving Thursday morning, Aug. 31 at 1:40 a. m., arriving in Portland at 7 a. m. On Friday, Sept. 1 he will leave Portland at 6 p. m., arriving in San Francisco on Saturday, Sept. 2 at 9:18 p. m., where he will remain to deliver the Labor Day address. The itinerary through California is in the hands of Secretary Gallagher of the San Francisco Labor Council.

A SUCCESSFUL STRIKE

Reports World Wide in Extent All Agree That the Sailors Have Been Universally Successful.

Washington, July 29.--While news of a specific character is yet difficult to obtain as to the actual results of the Seamen's strike, yet enough is known that it may be stated that the strike has proven very successful. Other organizations working in connection with the seamen have in large measure benefited by the seamen's success. Definite reports from Great Britain include advantageous settlements at Aberdeen, Severn, Cardiff, Clyde, Forth, Grangemouth, Hartlepools, Humber, Leinster, Manchester, Mersey, Newport, Southhampton, Swansea and all other ports of consequence. These ports ship a very large number of seamen to practically every port in the world. It is said that there is a good feeling existing and that the unions are increasing in membership at a tremendous rate.

DELUDED MEN GET JUDGMENT

Grand Rapids, Mich., July 29.--The Architectural Woodworking Company and the Grand Rapids Show Case Company have been mulcted in damages to the amount of $435. These two companies brought from Philadelphia under false pretenses, thirty-seven laborers, to be employed in factories where a strike is now in progress. When these men arrived they were hurried to the sixth floor of the Show Case Company plant, where 150 were already quartered, and forced to sleep there over night. In the testimony it was brought out that the strike breakers are all foreigners, unable to speak English, and that few, if any, are mechanics, simply being common laborers placed in the factories as a bluff. Walter H. Hendig, representing fifteen of the imported men, was awarded the verdict above mentioned.

50-CENT ASSESSMENT

Convention of Glass Bottle Blowers Make Heavy Contribution to Fund for the Defense of McNamaras.

Washington, July 29.—The Glass Bottle Blowers Association, at its recent convention in Columbus, O., unanimously declared a 50-cent assessment upon its entire membership to aid in the defense of the McNamaras. In order that the money might be immediately available the fiscal officers were instructed to advance the total amount at once from the funds in the general treasury. When the convention took the action levying the assessment the Associated Press reported to the country at large that the levy was "10 cents per member", instead of "50 cents per member." The Associated Press was asked to make the correction, but up to this time no correction has been noted.

LAW TO BE TESTED

Columbus, O., July 29.—The nine-hour law for women in the state of Ohio, commonly known as the Green law, is to run the gamut of the courts. Briefs have been filed in the common pleas court, but it is unlikely that any decision will be reached for some months.

O'CONNOR RE-ELECTED

Toledo, O., July 29.—T. V. O'Connor, president of the International Longshoremen's Association, has been re-elected to that position by acclamation. A resolution calling for the organization of a transportation department within the American Federation of Labor was referred to the executive council of the organization with instructions to confer with the organizations eligible in regard to the practicability of forming such a department.

ARKANSAS STATE FEDERATION

Little Rock, Ark., July 29.—The legislative committee of the Arkansas State Federation of Labor did splendid service for the movement during the recent extraordinary session of the state legislature. Through its efforts an employers' liability bill was enacted, a law compelling attendance of children under 16 years of age at least one-half of the school term (five counties being excepted), and also allowing school districts to expend certain sums for school books for the use of indigent children; another law aimed against the loan shark. Legislature also acted favorably on the federal income tax law. The committee forestalled the enactment of a compulsory arbitration law.

CONVENTION CALL

Ottawa, Ont., July 29.—The official call for the coming convention of the Trades and Labor Congress of Canada, to be held on Sept. 11, 1911, has just been issued. This year the convention will take place in Calgary, Province of Alberta.

Electricians of Kansas City, Mo., increased wages 50¢ per day. Pavers gained increase of 25¢ per day.

Strike of Westmoreland County, Pa., Coal Miners Is One of the Longest Strikes in History.

Washington, D. C., July 29.—The strike of the coal miners in Westmoreland County, Pa. is made the subject of an article in the American Magazine by A. S. Crapsey, and some of the paragraphs make interesting reading:

"No one could be with these men for any length of time without feeling for them a sympathetic admiration. They were sacrificing their immediate comfort for a future good; they were fighting for a cause; they were convinced that they were battling for the two primary rights of man, the right of a man to own himself and the right of a man to own his job. Most of them had come from Eastern Europe, lured by promises of freedom and plenty. They found slavery and starvation awaiting them. These men were living on starvation allowances. The union gave each man $2.50 a week, with a small additional sum for each child. They would march every afternoon a distance of five miles to and from the mines and go supperless to bed, and yet they held on. They asked 'Where is the freedom you promised me? Where is the plenty'? The condition of the women and children in the shacks that the labor unions built to shelter them will not bear description. They are half-starved; they are clothed in the cast off rags of others; they are innocent victims of a great social wrong. The strikers are beaten, but only for a time."

REPREHENSIBLE

Lumber Mill Employers Advocating Un-American Methods to Supply Labor For Saw Mills.

Jacksonville, Fla., July 29.—At a meeting of the Georgia-Florida Saw Mill Association, a set of resolutions was adopted that ought to bring the blush of shame to the cheeks of every self-respecting American citizen. It appears that this association, with its beggarly wage, has been unable to obtain sufficient help to keep in its mills a full complement of men. The resolutions in substance call upon town and city officials and boards of trade to enter into a campaign whereby all idle men will be declared vagrants and forced to leave the towns and cities under pain of being deprived of their liberty. One of the whereases to the resolution says that "from investigation of the statutes of the state of Florida, it is apparent that the idle men are violators of the law and can be forced to go to work and contribute to the wealth and prosperity of themselves and the state." A resolve incorporates "that the secretary of this association call on the Jacksonville Board of Trade to use its influence toward bringing about an active campaign throughout the entire state to run the vagrants and idle out of the cities and towns and force them to earn their support".

LAW BEING VIOLATED

Kansas City, Kans., July 29.—The President of the State Federation of Labor has caused the arrest of one of the division superintendents of the Frisco Railroad. It is alleged that this official has been requiring members of the Switchmen's Union to sign an agreement to withdraw from that organization as a condition precedent to remaining in the service. This action is in direct conflict with the state law.

FOREIGN NOTES

There was recently introduced into the Woolner-Hampton Carriage Shop of the London & North-Western Railway Company, a "speediator". This led to difficulty, but the speediator was removed pending a definite decision by the company.

The shop assistants, warehouse men and clerks at a mass meeting adopted a resolution calling on the Government to include in the shops bill provisions for a sixty-hour week, including not less than an hour for dinner and half an hour for tea, as well as a weekly half-holiday.

C. W. Bowerman, M. P., has been nominated as successor to Mr. Steadman as secretary to the Trades Union Congress. Mr. Bowerman's election is assured, there being no other person nominated.

Keir Hardy, M. P., accompanied Mr. Fisher, Prime Minister of Australia, in a tour through the South Wales mining section, for the purpose of investigation.

English papers are warning members of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers to refrain from migrating to New York, informing them of the strike of the machinists now in progress to establish the eight-hour day.

According to the annual report of the London Labor Conciliation Board, disputes in the London district are on the decrease, many difficulties now being amicably adjusted by the employer and employes, without recourse to the conciliation board.

A dispute recently occurred at the Thames Iron Works among a section of the laborers working on gunboats, over a question of wages. After a strike of three days a settlement was reached, the men securing an increase of three shillings per week.

RAILWAY WORKERS' INCREASE

London, July 29.--An impending strike on the North-Eastern Railway has been averted by the company granting an advance in wages. The increase affects apprentice fitters, turners, blacksmiths, coppersmiths and pattern makers, as well as other related trades.

BUILDING TRADES STRIKE

Paris, July 29.--The general strike in the building trades in this city involves 80,000 men. The strike was called to establish a nine-hour day and the abolition of piece work. The building industry is at a complete standstill, with the men firm in their determination to win the contest.

SCOTTISH MINERS

Edinburgh, July 29.--The annual conference of the Scottish Miners' Federation will convene within a short time. There is much dissatisfaction among the miners over a multitude of existing grievances. The convention will pass upon many important matters, such as weekly pay days, "abnormal places", and the abolition of what is known as "Billy Fairplay". This is a system of working by which the pay of miners is determined by the amount of round coal produced by them.

Teamsters of Dubuque, Ia., secured increase of 50¢ per week.

CONVICT LABOR RUINOUS

Use of Prisoners in Manufacturing Demoralizes Prices and Reduces Labor Of Free Workmen.

New York, July 29.--In a brochure just published, dealing with the convict labor problem, the following excerpt is of interest:

"Reviewing the general question of convict labor as a competitive factor, it may be said that manufacturers consider such competition unfair and ruinous, demoralizing to markets and business stability, compelling the reduction in prices below a fair margin of profit and often even below the cost of production. Wages are forced to the lowest limit in a vain effort to lower the cost of production to that of the prison contractor. In some cases a deterioration of quality of material is used and in others an entire abandonment to the prisons of the manufacture of certain grades of goods has become necessary. In the boot and shoe industry the testimony of manufacturers is that the low cost of production of prison made goods—a cost decreasing steadily with the increasing efficiency of the convict, through the equipment of prisons with improved machinery--is enabling the prison manufacturer to drive the employer of free labor out of the market, or force on him a reduction in the regular prices of many lines of goods."

AN OLD STORY

United States Senator, Nettled Over Garbled Reports in Newspapers Makes Vigorous Comment.

Washington, July 29.--While a bill in the United States Senate, calling for the construction of a memorial to commemorate the courage and constancy of the Confederate navy was under discussion, Senator Heyburn, of Idaho, spoke in opposition to it. In the course of his remarks he took a vigorous punch at the newspapers, as follows:

"It might be imagined from the squibs of the newspapers that I found a pleasure in discussing or speaking of or thinking of these questions. I do not. The newspapers evidently are in sympathy with this kind of legislation. The mail has been bringing to me day after day, since a few days ago, expressions from newspapers, garbled, untrue, intended to deceive as to what I said and as to what I meant. If the preservation of this country depended upon the newspapers, God save it, for no other power could. They are not all disloyal. Some are loyal, but silent. Some are disloyal, but blatant. Some of them delight to express their disloyalty and to criticize unfairly men who dare to be loyal or to express loyal sentiments. The press has ceased to have any influence upon great questions. The people of the United States have lost confidence in it because it threw away the right to claim their confidence."

KEYMEN GET RAISE

Chicago, July 29.--The Board of Conciliation appointed to investigate the dispute between the Great Northwestern Telegraph Company and the members of the Commercial Telegraphers' Union, has filed its report with the Canadian Government at Ottawa. This report is unanimous in its findings and provides for a set of working rules and a schedule of minimum wages 6% higher than the former scale. All of the men who were dismissed on account of activity in the union were reinstated.

ESTABLISH EIGHT HOUR DAY

Springfield, O., July 29.--The United Association of Plumbers, by an agreement entered into without friction, has established the eight-hour day. This makes nine crafts in the city now enjoying the shorter work day.

NATIONAL HOME FOR BARBERS

Indianapolis, July 29.--If plans already in hand are carried out, the Journeymen Barbers International Union will establish a home for its members on the lines of those already established by the Typographical Union and Pressmen's Union. An offer of one hundred acres of land at Sand Springs, Okla., has been tendered free of cost to the national officers, on which to erect a building. Another offer has been made by a prominent business man to donate 5% of the gross receipts of his business for five years for a fund to build the home.

CHAUFFEURS WIN STRIKE

Atlantic City, July 29.--The taxicab chauffeurs went on strike as a protest against a reduction in their weekly wages for their outfits, in addition to the gasoline rebate which the company demanded. A few hours only were necessary to reach a settlement whereby the money should not be deducted for uniforms and the men allowed to purchase their own gasoline.

REJECT RESOLUTION

Toledo, July 29.--A resolution introduced at the annual convention of the Longshoremen, calling for the adoption of the principles of the Socialist Party by organized labor, was defeated by a vote of 4 to 1.

BLEACH WORKS' STRIKE

Belfast, July 29.--A strike is in progress at the Lambeg Bleach Works. The strike occurred over a dispute regarding wages. It is alleged that the police have been extremely brutal to the strikers and it is likely that the matter will be brought up in the House of Commons.

ENGINEERS GET ADVANCE

Birmingham, Eng., July 29.--About 10,000 men are affected by the increase of wages which has been granted by the Birmingham Engineering Trades Employers to the employes belonging to the Engineers and Allied Trades Societies' Federation. The amount of advance totals $130,000 a year. An agreement has been entered into for the increased scale of wages to continue for three years.

TRAMWAY MEN OUT

London, July 29.--The tramway men at Douglas, Isle of Man, are on strike. They demand an increase in wages and overtime pay for Sunday work for all the men, and a reduction of hours among certain classes of workmen. It is stated that negotiations are in progress and that a settlement will soon be reached.

TRADES UNION CONGRESS

Washington, July 29.--The 44th British Trades Union Congress will convene in the town hall, Newcastle-on-Tyne, England, on Monday, Sept. 4. This is the third time the Congress has been held in that city. Mr. W. Mullin, the chairman of the Parliamentary Committee, will preside this year. W. B. MacFarlane and Daniel J. Tobin will attend the sessions this year as fraternal delegates from the American Federation of Labor.

FEDERATION OF TRADE UNIONS

Dundee, July 29.--The twelfth annual general council meeting of the General Federation of Trades Unions has just concluded its deliberations. The reports of officers showed an increase in membership of nearly 9,000, with the membership at the high water mark, namely 711,994, showing an increase in the last ten years of over 100%. The total benefits paid during the year amounted to over $360,000.

DISPUTE SETTLED

Newcastle-on-Tyne, July 29.--The tacklers' dispute at a large textile mill in Sabden, upon the question of beam lifting, has been settled. Two tacklers who were discharged have been reinstated and satisfactory adjustment of other matters made, without resort to strike.

A LIVING WAGE

Boston, July 29.--The Governor of this state has appointed a commission to investigate women's wages and conditions of labor in the state. "How much does it cost a working woman to live in health and comfort?" How much does it cost her to live in filth and rags?" "How many women workers get wages enough to live in health?" "How many get enough to live in filth, and how many do not?" These are a few of the questions to which the commission will endeavor to supply an answer, as they are fundamental in every reform. Suggestions have been offered that the commission should determine the amount necessary to provide wage-earning women a comfortable subsistence. A similar commission in Wisconsin has drafted and submitted to the Legislature a minimum wage law, based upon laws now in force in portions of Australia.

MOVING PICTURES FOR SCHOOLS

St. Paul, July 29.--The state Labor Bureau of Minnesota has been engaged in gathering statistics regarding the amount of money expended by school children on picture shows. This investigation is being made with a view to taking up the question as to whether it will be advisable to provide picture shows for the schools. It has been learned that in St. Paul, Minneapolis and Duluth, comprising a population of 600,000, with 82,419 children attending school, the amount expended in thirty-eight weeks by these children amounted to approximately $75,000.

Carpenters of Miles City, Mont., secured increase of 50¢ per day and reduced working hours from nine to eight.

"CHRISTIAN LABOR TEMPLE"

New York's Congested District Selected for Establishment of Labor Temple to Apply New Methods.

New York, July 29.--In the July 22 number of the Outlook there is an interesting article written by Charles Stelzle on the "Labor Temple." Thru his influence a building has been secured at Fourteenth Street and Second Avenue and designated as the "Labor Temple." Religious services are conducted, but undenominational in character. A distinctive feature is the open forum on Tuesday nights for the discussion of social problems. All schools of thought are permitted to render short discourses, while moving pictures form another feature of the program for Sunday evenings. The article is worthy of perusal.

WAGES IN FRANCE

Paris, July 29.—In the manufacture of cotton, woolen, silk and linen goods the domestic, or "house" system prevails, scarcely 30% of employes being factory operatives. The women represent 45% of the number employed and children 15%. The average wages per day for the entire country are 77¢ for men, 38¢ for women and 19¢ for children. Owing to the domestic system, there is no regulation of hours of labor.

TRAMWAY INCREASE

Copenhagen, July 29.--The tramway employes have been successful in having the grade of a large number of men raised, which carries with it an increase in wage amounting to 307,000 crowns a year.

CAN'T DESTROY ORGANIZATION

Stockholm, July 29.--The tramway employes over a year ago emerged from a bitter strike with their organization badly crippled, and were compelled to return to work unconditionally. After a year's effort, the organization has been restored and with greater strength than ever before. It is now negotiating for an increase and better working conditions, with recognition of the organization, and have every assurance that their demands will be met without a struggle.

DECK SERVANTS WIN STRIKE

Berlin, July 29.—The strike of the deck servants, engineers and firemen of W. Egan & Co. ended successfully, with an agreement for a period of two years. The increase in wages amounts to 40,000 marks a year. The firm has thirty-seven steamers, and the average increase is 160 marks per man per year.

ANOTHER WAGE SETTLEMENT

Hamburg, July 29.—The movement on the Friedberg Regional lines has been successfully terminated by the Amsterdam railway men. An increased wage and promotion scheme has been established and mileage money increased.

Printers of Dubuque, Ia., obtained increase of $1 per week.

LLOYD GEORGE'S FAIRNESS

London, July 29.--Mr. Lloyd George, in charge of the proposed insurance bill, is being complimented from every quarter. The manner in which he has handled the bill, giving unlimited opportunity to everyone desiring to make suggestions, is unique in the history of English law makers. He has opposed all methods which have for their purpose the restricting of open and fair discussion and is an attentive listener to every proposition, no matter from whom it may emanate. The result of his efforts is being watched and it is predicted that as a result of his methods, a satisfactory solution will be evolved, with all sections of the people fairly well satisfied.

AN APPROPRIATE HEADING

Washington, July 29.--Reynolds's Newspaper, one of the old and substantial publications of London, noted for its fairness and advocacy of legitimate reforms, is unique in many respects. It has many able contributors and its news columns contain accurate and authentic information. A silent streak of humor is occasionally noticed. Over the column devoted to financial news appears the single word "Mammon".

ANOTHER RAISE

London, July 29.--An official statement has just been issued detailing the negotiations between the Midland Railway Company and its employes in the goods department. It contains information that a number of substantial improvements have been secured in working conditions. The minimum wage of the sidings porters has been raised $1.00 per week, with a general increase of one shilling per week. Decreases in working hours to eight during the summer have been conceded to numerous classes of employes, while overtime is to be paid for work on Sundays and holidays.

TEACHERS' PENSIONS

London, July 29.--An amendment to the Superannuation law for Scottish teachers is a live question and Scottish members of Parliament are pressing Mr. Lloyd George to make financial provision therefor. Mr. George assured those interested that as soon as the National Insurance Bill becomes a law he intends to effect some improvement in the conditions of superannuation of elementary school teachers, who are excluded from the national health insurance.

MEMBERSHIP ON INCREASE

Berlin, July 29.--The grand section of railway men of the German Transport Workers' Union has made great progress in membership and effectiveness during the past year. The increase in membership was especially notable in the last months of 1910 and during the first quarter of 1911. The recognized organization is antagonized by another union dominated by the management of the railways. The indications are that the dual union will be eventually absorbed by the regular organization.

Carpenters of Independence, Kan., have increased scale to 45¢ per hour.